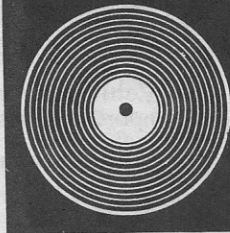


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CALIFORNIA RAMBLERS ALUMNI 1960





RECORD RESEARCH

THE MAGAZINE OF RECORD STATISTICS AND INFORMATION

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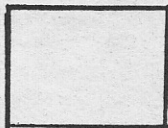
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Our last issue was No. 12 (no longer available). Issue 13 is
in the preparation stage and will be dispatched when com-
pleted to all our active subscribers.

THE CALIFORNIA RAMBLERS ---

Where They Are And What They Are Doing Today

The CALIFORNIA RAMBLERS, more so than orchestras under individual's names, set the pace for dance bands in the early twenties. They originated and created. They recorded original and popular tunes for all the phonograph companies under an endless list of pseudonyms. Their impact, style, precision, and arrangements were the foundation of the swing era of the late thirties.

From time to time Record Research has reported on the activities of the CALIFORNIA RAMBLERS. More discographical information will follow. While gathering background information, it was Herb Weil who suggested this article. The ground rules were established with the aid of Ed Kirkeby. So, where are the men of the CALIFORNIA RAMBLERS today?

The number of men participating on CALIFORNIA RAMBLERS' recordings, especially in the later years, are so numerous it would be impractical to report on each one. Therefore, it was decided to limit the alumni to the actual members of the CALIFORNIA RAMBLERS present during the early creative period. In other words, this list is limited to members of the band where the sound of the bass sax set it apart from others. The alumni report does not include men added on occasion for recording sessions. Nor does it include the band known as the McALPINEERS or the later CALIFORNIA RAMBLERS that played at the Firenze Restaurant. With but few exceptions, all the men played on the bandstand at the California Ramblers Inn, on the road, or in vaudeville.

The following are all deceased, and now are listed simply "IN MEMORIAM". But they number among them the greatest and near great in creativeness on their instruments. Outstanding among these is the name of Adrian Rollini. Without him the sound that made the RAMBLERS what they were would not have existed.

Bobby Davis (reeds)
Jimmy Dorsey (reeds)
Tommy Dorsey (tb)
Arthur Hand (vi & front man)
Ray Ketchingman (bjo)
Stan King (dm)
Joe LaFaro (vi)
Fud Livingston (reeds)
Chelsea Quealey (tp)
Adrian Rollini (bass sax)

Here is a present-day report on the men of the RAMBLERS who are very much alive. (They told us so!)

WALLACE T. "ED" KIRKEBY - the business brains and mentor of the CALIFORNIA RAMBLERS. He continued his recording contract work until he became manager, business associate, and advisor for the late "Fats" Waller. He is still active as an agent, with offices in the Americas Building, New York City, presently guiding the fortunes of the Deep River Boys.

ARNOLD BRILHART (reeds) - President of Brilhart Musical Instrument Corp., 505 Oak Ave., Carlsbad, California, manufacturer of Brilhart designed mouthpieces and reeds. He stopped playing professionally about 1950, although he still plays occasionally for testing new products.

IRVING BRODSKY (P) - one of the original RAMBLERS, still playing professionally, freelancing around New York City. He devotes much of his time to arranging, TV work, jingles, and recording. He had a new release in 1960 for Epic, "That Ragtime Sound", featured by Joe Glover and his Orchestra.

SPENCER W. CLARK (bass sax) - presently assistant purchasing agent for a small manufacturing plant in the Chicago area. From 1939 to 1955 he was in one phase or another of commercial aviation. He resigned the music profession in 1940, until 1956 when he became a member of Local 10. Now back playing club work with local groups in a limited way. He found the urge to play did not go away and is very glad of any opportunity to get back into harness - provided it does not become too regular an activity.

by Woody Backensto

T. FRANK CUSH (tp) - now a salesman of air conditioning and heating equipment in the Chicago area. Always a mainstay and in demand for recording sessions by top flight orchestras, he was a member of a service band during World War II. After his honorable discharge in 1944 he left the music business.

FRED CUSICK (reeds) - although still a member of Local 802, he stopped playing professionally in 1941. Since then, has been an audio technician with CBS --- one of their top audio engineers, we might add. Had quite a few musical shows including Raymond Scott, Perry Como, Ken Murray, Vic Damone, Patti Paige, and Frank Sinatra and kept social contact with many old timers from 802. At 57 he feels 27. Also a "Ham", W2HID (20 meters). One of the original RAMBLERS.

ELMER L. "BUNNY" DROWN (reeds) - a partner in the brokerage firm of Pierce & Drown, Pittsburgh, Pa. Not having the time he stopped playing professionally in 1958. He came home from New York in 1926 and played various jobs in town, radio stations, hotels, night clubs, and about 15 years in theaters.

J.R. "JIM" DUFF (reeds) - an original member of the RAMBLERS, now general superintendent for General Outdoor Advertising Co., Youngstown, Ohio branch. He has not played professionally since 1946 but has not given up music entirely -- a member of the Youngstown Sheet & Tube Co. male chorus, Youngstown Philharmonic Chorus, and First Baptist Church Choir. Has four grandchildren and won't travel.

TOM FELLINI (bjo) - no information other than living in New York City.

ORVILLE E. GIBBS (reeds) - an insurance agent for General Insurance Companies of America, in Detroit, Mich. He left the music profession in 1929. Recovered from surgery earlier in the year (tumor removed from the saliva gland). There's a story about the haircut Gibbs gave Ed Kirkeby back in the 30's, but details are unavailable.

FRED HENRY (DM) - the original drummer of the RAMBLERS, still active as a freelance musician in all fields. Living in Los Angeles, California.

LeROY "ROY" JOHNSTON (tp) - enjoying life in the outdoors as a member of the greens crew of the Rockville Links Corporation, Long Island, N. Y. Has two grandsons. No longer plays professionally. Left the business about 1953.

ABRAHAM "ABE" LINCOLN (tb) - still a musician by profession, freelancing out of the Los Angeles area. His horn is heard on many west coast studio recordings of recent years.

WILLIAM "BILL" MOORE (tp) - still playing professionally at Nevelle Country Club, Ellenville, New York. One of the original 9-man RAMBLERS orchestra. The adjoining photo also shows his baby daughter.

LORING "RED" NICHOLS (c) - the 1959 movie "Five Pennies" has brought Red's name back into the limelight. Active with his own group since the war, making a successful State Department tour of the Near East the beginning of 1960, returning home for a hernia operation, active again since August, feeling better than he has in 25 years.

LLOYD H. "OLE" OLSEN (tb) - rarely blows his instrument professionally anymore but makes a living in the music preparation business -- a combination of copying and orchestrating. A member of the original RAMBLERS, now living in North Hollywood, California.

ARTHUR ROLLINI (reeds) - still freelancing in the New York area, also owns a business, a self-service, coin-operated, Laundromat, in Roslyn, Long Island. After the RAMBLERS he worked with Bert Lown, Paul Whiteman, George Olsen, then Benny Goodman for 5 years, and for 15-1/2 years on the ABC staff orchestra, leaving in December 1958 and freelancing since then.

"GAEL-LINN" RECORDS ON A BET

Samuel B. Charters

Despite today's great boom in the sale of phonograph records it is still difficult for the small company producing authentic folk music to sell enough records to stay in business. The record market is still dominated by the adolescent buyer who is more interested in something that he hears over the radio four or five times a day than in something that is a little different to listen to. In present day Ireland there has been an interesting effort made to collect and preserve Irish traditional music on phonograph records, with the entire operation financed by gambling.

Since the second World War there has been a strong movement in Ireland to restore the country's spirit, to somehow stop the continuing drain of emigrants to the United States and England, to start new industries, and to bring new life to Ireland's cultural heritage of music and literature. The efforts taken to bring about a renewed interest in the music have been particularly successful. There still lives on in the western districts an older tradition of songs in the Irish language, and there are instrumentalists who still play the slow airs of the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries. On a collecting trip to the Irish speaking areas of County Galway in the fall of 1960 I heard a woman sing a song with a melody that was older even than the style of the sixteenth century. The words began with a verse using medieval number symbolism that the singer herself didn't understand.

The effort being made to preserve this older music has been in two directions. Everywhere in Ireland now there are local branches of a national group called the Comaltas Ceoltoiri Eireann, which organizes competitions - called "Fleadh Ceoil" (or "Feasts of Music" in English) - among singers and musicians in the area. Along with this there have been a number of recordings of Irish traditional music released by an organization known as "Gael-Linn." The name "Gael-Linn" means Irish football pool, and the organization is simply a national football betting system. Anyone who wants to place his bets on the outcome of a number of games simply sends in his card with his choices and a few shillings to cover his bet. "Gael-Linn" pays up to 10,000 pounds a week to winners, but still has a large profit to use for its many projects. The officials laughed about some of the difficulties they have with their scores. The betting is done on local games of gaelic football - a sport combining some of the features of soccer, rugby, volleyball, and basketball - and to get the results they have to rely on country secretaries or parish priests. Quite often someone will make a mistake in reporting a score and the entire results will have to be refigured at five o'clock in the morning.

As part of its program to bring new life to Irish institutions "Gael-Linn" began producing records of Irish traditional music in December of 1958, financing the records with the proceeds from the football pool. Since that time there has been a small but steady output of new releases. In the fall of 1959 the first extended play and long play records were put on the market, and they have managed to do as well as the first 78's, even though the music was not as strongly traditional as the first releases. The operation is handled in the organization's Dublin offices, with the records themselves stored in a shed a block away. The first releases were pressed in quantities of 2500; so there was an immediate need for space.

In the relatively short time that they have been available to scholars and to collectors of Irish music the "Gael-Linn" releases have attracted considerable attention. One of the reasons for their success is the quality of the records themselves. They are recorded and mastered at the Peter Hunt recording studios in Dublin and the fidelity is excellent. There has been no expense spared in the pressing and packaging, the only drawback being the printing on the record sleeves and labels. All the printing is in Irish. Mr. Derek Fitzgerald handles the sales of the records, and Mr. Brendon Doyle handles the production.

Among the artists who have recorded for "Gael-Linn" are some of the finest traditional singers and instrumentalists in Ireland.

The Galway singer Sean 'Ac Dnionncha, the Kerry singer Sean de hOra, and the fine uilleann piper Liam Clancy are all included in the 78 releases. A listing of the recordings shows that nearly every kind of music, within the older Irish tradition, has been included. The catalog itself shows what can be done with a bet, if there are men with the imagination to try something a little different.

A LISTING OF GAEL-LINN RELEASES

CEIRNINI GAEL-LINN

	78's	5/9
CE 1	Páidín's Wife She is Your Mammy Gael-Linn Jig	Seán 'Ac Donncha Seán Ó Riain (Fiddle)
CE 2	Lament of the 3 Marys Gentle Kate. Miss McLeods Reel Girls of Fermoy (Reel)	Seósamh Ó hÉanaí Tomás Riobhach (Uilleann Pipes)
CE 3	Fair Nancy Carolan' Concerto (Slow Air)	Seósamh Ó hÉanaí Tomás Riobhach (Uilleann Pipes)
CE 4	Woman of the Beer Kerry C hoice Colonel Frazer Steamboat (Reels)	Seósamh Ó hÉanaí Donncha Ó Murchú (Fiddle)
CE 5	Town of Boyle Saintly Anne, The Garden (Reels)	Seán 'Ac Dhionncha Donncha Ó Murchú (Fiddle)
CE 6	The Yellow Bittern The Flowery Meadow (Jig)	Seán 'Ac Dhionncha Seosamh Ó Doibhlin (Fiddle)
CE 7	Gates of Ballyboy Johnston's Punch Rose in the Heather (Jigs)	Aodh Ó Duibheannaigh Johnny Pickering (Fiddle)
CE 8	Graveyard of Creggan Earl's Chair Tomas Stil (Reels)	Aodh Ó Duibheannaigh Seán Mac Lochlainn (Fiddle)
CE 9	On Tuesday Morning The Shy Bachelor Terence's Feast (Hornpipes)	Áine Ní Ghallchobhair Johnny Pickering (Fiddle)
CE 10	Gentle Brigid On going to the Bay Miss McLeod's Reel	Áine Ní Ghallchobhair Seán Mac Lochlainn (Fiddle)
CE 11	The Little White Calf The Pipers Heart Break Kennedy's Reel (Reels)	Seán de hÓra Donncha Ó Murchú (Fiddle)
CE 12	The Old Man The Connerrys (Slow Air)	Diarmuid Ó Flatharta Liam Clancy (Uilleann Pipes)
CE 13	The Blackthorn Bush Gerard Barry's Choice Banks of Loch Gowna (Jigs)	Seán 'Ac Dhionncha Paddy Canny (Fiddle)

(continued on page 12)

john mc andrew

STAR

STUDD

SHELLAC



HOAGY

Long ago, I discovered to my amazement that my approach to music was not the same as most people's, and I still wonder why. It seems that a great many music lovers decide first of all on a voice, or an instrument, or a style of playing, or a band, and they will make their record purchases based on what has been recorded in their particular category. I have never understood this, for it has always seemed to me that what comes first is the song, and then you search for a fresh or original delineation of it; and if you love the melody enough, there never can be too many different and good versions of it. Of course, there must be a saturation point, and this is reached when artists keep on repeating the same numbers over and over, and eventually it makes you so fed up with certain numbers that you can't stand even the thought of hearing them again. Even in the case of such overemphasis, however, it seems to me that you tire of it when the piece of music is not in itself of outstanding quality and cannot weather constant repetition, depending more on interpretation than basic structure, and that is why I for one have had all I'll ever want of When the Saints Go Marching In, Royal Garden Blues, Fidgety Feet, Tin Roof Blues and such. Conversely, Star Dust has probably been recorded far more than any of these, but because of its intrinsic value, the constant reminders of it do not jar the nerves as do the others... perhaps because it isn't confined as exclusively to one type of interpretation. I can say this without particular prejudice, as Star Dust has never been one of my own favorites, but there is no denying its deserved niche at the top of the list of all-time bests, although why it should be number one eludes me. Several of Hoagy Carmichael's compositions, it seems to me, deserve as much and more acclaim, and I am dismayed to find that those I would choose have been meagerly represented on wax, although all of them invite as wide a range of performance as Star Dust. My choice for the most neglected Carmichael composition is I Should Have Known You Years Ago. It was the theme song of a forgotten 1940 musical film called Road Show. It is a most attractive title, and has a haunting, plaintive and delightfully chorde melody. It was recorded sparsely and unimaginatively by a handful of artists: Carol Bruce and Woody Herman Orch. (two separate recordings) on De.; The Charioteers (Co.), Bradley-McKinley Orch. (Co.), Freddy Martin (BB), Wayne King (Vi.) and Frankie Masters (Ok.) Of these, only The Charioteers showed any conception of the possibilities of the melody, and Woody Herman's was acceptable, if slick.

The next most ignored item is New Orleans, which was at first prominently featured by the Casa Loma Orch. and recorded by them on Br. in the early thirties. At that time, Bennie Moten's band did a rousing version on Vi., there was a mediocre Candy and Cocoa instrumental cutting on Vo. and that was about it. So that even from the start, and despite the Casa Loma sponsorship, very few recording labels picked it up. Almost unexpectedly, there was an invigorating, exciting duet by Hoagy himself with Ella Logan, with wonderful Hoagy piano and out-of-the-world backing by Perry Botkin's small jazz group on Br. in 1938, which would be hard to top. Since then, there has been a vocal version by Jo Stafford and Frankie Laine (Co.) which is best described as not in their element; a strictly commercial pseudo-Dixieland etching by Bobby Hackett and a group too large for the material

(Cap.); the New Orleans Shufflers, on an independent label; Kingsway; and a fairly good one by Jimmy McPartland on Grand Award. Next, there is Baltimore Oriole, a really striking and original musical theme out of the Bogart-Bacall To Have and Have Not film in 1942. They even deleted Hoagy's own interpretation of it on a bar-room piano before the film went into general release, effectively cutting off any attention it may have attracted, and all you get of it is a few bars of the melody as the action moves on to the next scene. Unfortunately, there were no sound-track albums in those days... but why don't they release some of those old sound-tracks now?

The first dinking of Baltimore Oriole was, oddly enough, a twelve-inch one by Frances Langford, backed by the Victor Young Orch. and with Hoagy doing a whistling solo on it. He might well have duetted with her, as he did with Ella Logan on New Orleans, and the record would have been the better for it, although it was very good anyway. While not in the accepted Langford tradition, the singer did not fail the song, and the Victor Young background was sensitive to the requirements of the melodic pattern and Hoagy's whistling was first-rate. Unfortunately, it was incongruously coupled with a Stan Kenton version of Gambler's Blues, but at least Decca did reissue the Langford side on their Curtain Call series in the early fifties (coupled with her Then You've Never Been Blue), probably because of the Carmichael whistling, which is listed on the label (De DU-1523). This was available on both 78 and 45 at the time. Hoagy also did a vocal of it on ARA in 1946 and it's on his Pacific Jazz album of about three years ago. I found a solitary 78 of it by someone named Susan Sharon on Intro.; I'd say this was done about 1954. On a Cavalier LP., also from the earlier fifties, Stan Wilson does it acceptably, with his own guitar accompaniment. Hugh Shannon included it in a 10" Atlantic album, and he at least understands the song. Barbara Lea recorded it for Prestige about 1956, and the most recent recording was by Alan Dean, with Robert Maxwell and his group, on MGM. This one is rather well done. Curiously enough, there have been no band recordings of this song.

Judy was another pip of a number by Hoagy from the mid-thirties, with far from enough coverage or appreciation. There were two or three lackadaisical spinoffs of it that hardly deserve mention, such as Bob Chester on BB; but the Dorsey Bros. did it on early De., and Lionel Hampton on Vi. Hoagy did it in a De. Hoagy album in the early forties, but my favorite rendition is a straight vocal on DeE by Al Bowlly, with superb piano accompaniment by Monia Liter. By some miracle, Decca reissued this in the U.S. on Champion 40032, coupled with the original backing, Isle of Capri, also with interesting piano by Monia Liter. One Morning in May is perhaps Hoagy's loveliest melody and it is in the Star Dust tradition, although the initial pressing of it would belie this declaration. It was a wow of a bang-up delivery on Vi by 'Hoagy Carmichael and his Orchestra,' which was really the Dorsey Brothers Orch. but they were under contract to Brunswick at the time and couldn't use their own name... just as Casa Loma did when they appeared briefly on the Vi label as Glen Gray and his Orch. Despite the whirlwind Dorsey arrangement, the beautiful melody is preserved, and there is a chorus of scintillating Hoagy fingering, and he is always discernible in the background at other times. This remains my number one choice on One Morning in May. Casa Loma did it two or three years later as part of a Carmichael album. In 1933, it was also done by Lanny Ross (Vi.), Wayne King (Br.), Todd Rollins (Pe.), and, in England, by The Broadway Entertainers (R-Z), Maurice Elwin (Rex) and Ray Noble with Al Bowlly (HMV). About 1953, Conley Graves (pno), played it for an obscure label at. In 1958 it appeared (this same recording) on a 12" Liberty LP. Two or three years ago, Andre Kostelanetz performed it for a Co. LP in the accepted lifeless, unimaginative Kostelanetz fashion, dispensing with the delightful coda in the process. The most recent taping seems to be the one by Alan Dean, with Robert Maxwell and his group, on MGM, and it is very tastefully done by both of them although they, too, unfortunately exclude the final few enchanting bars that seem to set off the main thread of the theme so charmingly.

HOT DISCANA

by
John H. Baker

16 East Broad Street
Columbus, Ohio

JOE ROBICHEAUX - HIS FIRST RECORDING

While at a George Lewis 'Columbus Ohio' jazz concert last year we queried its talented pianist, Joe Robicheaux, about his very first recording. He's the Robicheaux of early 30s Vocalion record fame). All that he could recall that it was recorded in New Orleans in the late 20s and that a Joe Lawrence and an unidentified female blues singer shared the vocal efforts and he was the accompanist (his name unlisted). Recently this recording has come to light and the fine Robicheaux piano with its so-called Earl Hines trumpet style is very evident.

Date: Dec. 13, 1929 -

CHRISTINA GRAY - Vocal with piano.

W403406A Okeh 8757 - The Reverend is My Man (No composer credits)

CHRISTINA GRAY & JOE LAWRENCE - vocal Duet with Piano Acc.

W403407A Okeh 8757 Just Like You Walked In, You Can Walk Out (Robicheaux-Gray)

ELIZA CHRISTMAS LEE AND WILLIE GANT

(addendum to Gant Story in RR#30)

Here are statistics and comments regarding above.

Date: ca. Summer 1921.

ELIZA CHRISTMAS LEE AND HER JAZZ BAND

7677a Gennett 4801 I Ain't Givin' Nothin' Away (Zoeller)

7687a Gennett 4801 Arkansas Blues (Lada-Williams)

In addition to the other instrumentation mentioned by Gant I also hear a violin and maybe a banjo. There's a passage of hot piano in the closing of 'Arkansas Blues'.

SIPPY WALLACE AND CICERO THOMAS

Date: Nov. 1926

SIPPY WALLACE - contralto with Cornet & piano Accomp.

9929-a Okeh 8439-a I'm A Mighty Tight Woman (Wallace)

9930-a Okeh 8439-B Bedroom Blues (Thomas-Bynum)

Back before 1950 the cornetist was considered to be King Oliver but since then it has generally been conceded not to be the King. It would appear to be the identical horn which is in the accompaniment to Sam Theard (Br 7098) recording of 'The Lover And The Beggar' which in the opinion of KENNETH HULSIZER who had done much research in Chicago, is Cicero Thomas who has been sparsely recorded. It is known that Cicero did record on a Ruben Reeves record session and was a member of the orchestra of Walter Barnes and his Royal Creolians. It is believed that Cicero is a member of the famous George Thomas music clan (Sippie, Hociel, Hershall). It is noted that the label of 'The Lover and The Beggar' credits the rendition with being "vocal with piano" and it is quite surprising to discover on playing the record that an Oliver-like cornetist is in the accompaniment.

MAMIE SMITH AND 'JAILHOUSE BLUES'

A recent research program has been underway to discover the number of motion pictures of which Mamie Smith was a participant. One of these movies was 'Jailhouse Blues'. Your reporter

has been fortunate enough to have secured a 16" - 33 1/3 rpm Sound On Disc, a disc which supposedly was to be coordinated with the film motion. This recording, a shellac product, playing from the inside out, was recorded and pressed by Victor Talking Machine Company and was the property of Columbia Pictures. This information appears on the recording. Further information indicates that it was 'copyright 1928 by Columbia Pictures Corporation'. A numerical of '53717' appears on the label and 'C 53717' appears on the wax. Other data gives the title of the sound on disc as 'Jail House Blues Reel 1'. Although no mention of Mamie Smith is given on the label it is she who sings and talks on the waxing. Another vocalist on the disc is Porter Grainger. In the opening and fade out one can hear an excellent hot Clarence Williams-style aggregation. Incidentally, 'Jailhouse Blues' did appear at the Alhambra Theatre in New York City in May of 1930.

SEGAR ELLIS & THE DORSEY BROTHERS

While on the subject of 16" sound on Disc recordings, here is another item from my collection which should be of interest. It's "SEGAR ELLIS & HIS EMBASSY CLUB ORCHESTRA VA-823-1-2 Recorded by and Property of The Vitaphone Corporation, New York City, Pressed by Victor Talking Machine Company, Camden, New Jersey."

The musical performances are: (aural evidence)

- 1) How Can I Love Again After Loving You - Segar Ellis - vocal with Orch acc.
- 2) Am I Blue - Hot, entirely instrumental featuring solos from tp, cl, tb, gr.
- 3) I've Got A Feeling I'm Falling - Segar Ellis - vocal with Orch. Acc.

Although there is no indication as to the identity of the performing musicians, a recently discovered photo of the band appearing on a movie still (in the collection of staffer, Ernie Smith) discloses, after some research, that Fuzzy Farrar, Jimmy Dorsey, Tommy Dorsey, Eddie Lang, Arthur Schutt, Al Duffy and Stan King are the musicians on the above 16" sound on disc.

In closing, your reporter would like to obtain the films of the Mamie Smith and Segar Ellis items in order to coordinate them with these discs in his possession.

RIM CHIPS



"You must be stupid. Who in their right mind would stand up at a jazz concert and shout, 'I like Liberace'?"

reminiscing in **TEMPO** by Frank Kelly

WHERE ARE THEY?

BUDDY SAWYER - who blew fine Billy Butterfield Tpt - around his native Maine, NYC radio studios - on road with Joe Haymes - and fronted his own hot combo during the 30s around Fla. & Atlanta - still blows weekend club dates (despite having only one tooth) with his combo - his drummer is another New Englander - and ex-Ringling Circus side man - Charley Greene. Buddy's in the restaurant equip. biz in Jacksonville, Fla. BOB REYNOLDS - who blew Tpt. around Boston, Schenectady, N.Y. and the NYC radio studios - blows in & around Miami, Fla -

LES ARQUETTE, who blew reeds with Jean Goldkette, Casa Loma, Mal Hallett, Austin Wylie, etc., and brother of Jack Paar's Charlie Weaver - is currently engaged in his own insurance biz in in his native Toledo, Ohio. GENE WILLIAMS who sang with Claude Thornhill's band, and later fronted his own band - and more recently did a bit of TV singing - now tends bar at the New Charlie's Tavern - which isn't owned or operated by the heirs of the late beloved Issy Charles Jacobs - the prop. of the original Charley's Tavern - which was demolished - with the complete Roseland ball room bldg. GENE WILLIAMS learned to tend bar at "JUNIORS" on NYC's W. 52nd St. where the young progressive tooters meet. VIRGIL KING who tickled the ivories with Tommy Christian's band tends bar in Newark, Ohio. ART BARNETT who drummed - doubled on hot Cornet & did comedy with Tommy Christian's band entered the acting lodge in 1938. Been on B'way in Annie Get Your Gun, on Godfrey & Fred Allen shows, etc. JOHNNY JOHNSTON who made as much as \$5,000 gross per week in movies, nite clubs, discs, etc. recently went to work on Wall St. for \$85. per week in recent months. Johnny was interviewing celebs over the radio from a NYC nite club. Obviously - his ex-KATHERINE GRAYSON has fared better in show biz - she's been quite successful with a recent nite club act in NYC, Las Vegas, etc. - even tho her film career is on the wane. MERLE JOHNSTON who was a big 30s NYC studio conductor, reedman, sax teacher - and the man who did the conducting for Willard Robison's memorable Deep River Music - currently teaches sax, repairs horns, sells & designs mouthpieces, etc. in his Los Angeles studio. VINCENTE GOMEZ - the famed Spanish Guitarist - who operated his own NYC restaurant - currently teaches Guitar in L.A.

HERMAN "Hymie" WALDMAN, who fronted one of Texas most popular society bands for thirty years is a most successful representative for Bache & Co. - at their Dallas, Tex. branch. Hymie recorded & got gobs of air time in Texas. PHIL BAXTER, song writer & leader of the defunct PHIL BAXTER'S TEXAS TOMMIES - is semi-retired and not in the best of health - has written such new songs as "Let's Have A Party" which was recently waxed by Wanda Jackson - another new Baxter tune is "I'm Sick & Tired of Waking Up Tired & Sick. Phil resides in Dallas, Tex. LON PACE, who played Trumpet with the late Hal McIntyer's band in the mid 40s-is currently employed at Dallas, Tex' First National Bank. JOE REICHMAN, the Pagliacci of the Piano, is band leader & talent booker at Dallas, Texas' Hotel Adolphus. CHICK WINTERS, whose band recorded - played & taught sax - currently is employed at Wright Aero in Woodridge, N.J. KENNY SARGENT is a DJ at Dallas, Tex' WRR. LARRY FUNK (remember his 30s radio band of a Thousand Melodies??) currently is a band booker with Music Corp. of America (MCA) at their New York office. TED FIORITO fronts a new club in Phoenix, Arizona - leads his band - and Marie McDonald "the Body" put up the loot.

HENRY HALSTEAD (Lew Ayres - the actor played Banjo and Phil Harris drummed with his 20s Los Angeles band) manages a club in Phoenix, Arizona...JOE SANDERS lives in Kansas City, Mo., and has failing eye sight. HAROLD THIELL, former Coon-Sanders' saxman - has been in hospital - he lives on his blueberry farm outside of N. Judson, Ind. FLOYD ESTEP, Coon-Sanders' ex-Saxman travels, and lives in Los Angeles, Cal. RUSS STOUT, ex Coon-Sanders' Banjoist is retired in Daytona Beach, Fla. REX DOWNING, who blew tram with the Coon-Sanders & JOE SANDERS bands - is county Judge of Poinsett County, Harrisburg, Ark - and lives in Weiner, Ark. JOE RICHOLSON, 1st Tpt. with Coon-Sanders' NITE HAWKS - works for the Pacific Gas & Elec. Co. - and lives in Bakersfield, Cal.

RESEARCHING THE 'DOWN SOUTH' BANDS

EXPLORATORY

WATSON'S BELLHOPS: Ezell (Easy) Watson - Leader, sax & cl; Raymond Watson - sax & cl; Jack Purvis - tp; Blue Steele - tb & possibly melophone; Mart Britt - bnj & vocals; Tommy Christian - sax & cl; Frank 'Pat' Davis - sax & cl; Sunny Clapp - tb; Eddie Stiles, p; Benny ???* - dms; Whitey ??? - dms; Pinky - ??? - dms; and probably Leon Smith - dms and Sid Conway - tp..... Don't think this band had more than 8 men at any one time. Britt, Ezell, Christian, Purvis, Whitey??, etc. recorded on Melotone as Roy Wilson's Georgia Crackers - one is Melotone 12026: Deserted Blues (E 35056)/Swamp Blues (E 35057) (recorded late 1930 or early 1931).

TOMMY CHRISTIAN (from South Georgia) played NYC's Trianon Ballroom, late 1926 and had the following personnel: Victor Manners, Alois Helig, Victor de Angelis - brass; T. Christian, Phil Fisher & Frank Troxel - reeds; Paul Close - accordion; Harry Rich - bnj; Art Bennett - tuba; Carl Pickel - dms no doubt the accordionist doubled on piano.

WARNER'S 7 ACES; Tom Brannon - tp; Jim O'Neal - tp & tuba; Don McIlvaine - tb; E. Pritchitt, Buck Buckner - saxes; Ralph Bennett - vln & sax; Byron Warner - pno & leader; Bob Pittman - bnj; Shucks Park - dms Jack Cathcart, Atlanta trumpeter told me he once played with this crew who performed in and around Atlanta, Georgia (1925 until ??). Recorded first on Okeh and then Columbia; also may have made a Brunswick.

MAYNARD BAIRD: (30s crew - active around Knoxville, Tenn. etc.) Recorded on Vocalion: Vic Johnson - pno; Sammy Goble - tp; Fred Brill - tp & sax; Horace Ogle - tb; Geo. Schuler & Harld Taft - saxes; Joe Fox - dms; Buddy Thayer - bass; M. Baird - leader.

SUNNY CLAPP: Recorded on Victor & Okeh, also on Victor (Carolina Dandies) and on Bluebird (Sunny Green). Personnel for Victor & Okeh discs: Sunny Clapp - tb & leader; Bob Hutchings, Tommy Howell - tps; Lee Howell - tb; Dick Dickerson - sax; Mac McCracken - tenor sax; Sidney Arodin - sax & cl; Cliff Brewton - pno; Francis Palmer - bass; unknown gtr; Joe Hudson - dms.

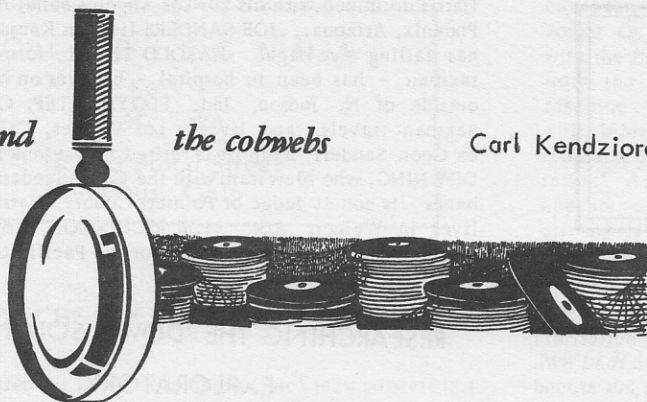
BLUE STEELE: Early group on Victor (20971 to 22436 approx.): Frankie Martinez; Frank Krisher - tps; Sunny Clapp - tb; Roger Sanford - sax; Pete Smith - tenor sax; Kenny Sargent - sax & cl. Sol Lewis - bass.....S. Gobel - tp. joined them on later Victor sessions. Later bands of Steele included Dub Shofner - tp; Les Arquette-tenor sax; Frank 'Pat' Davis-sax & cl; Ernie Winbourne-sax & vocals; Herb Haskett - tb; Brick English, Joe 'Horse' Hall - pnos; Gene Gifford-gtr; Jack Richman - vocals and two musicians; Sol Alman and ??? Smolke, instruments unknown. Blue Steele's real name was Gene Staples.

Comments to Frank Kelly, 625 W. 169 Street, New York 32, NY.

behind

the cobwebs

Carl Kendziora



More on New Flexo: Thanks to W. H. Buck of Lawrence, Kansas and Herb Thrune of Milwaukee, Wisconsin we now have some further information on this elusive label. Also a bit of confusion it would seem ... Herb calls our attention to the Johnny Campbell listing on page 164 of the A to E loose-leaf edition of Index To Jazz. Blackstone lists five "Flexo" discs by Campbell as follows: 301 - Jimtown Blues (158); 303 - The Only, Only One (153); 304 - Tin Roof Blues (147); 305 - Where's My Sweetie Hiding (148); 307 - Charleston Cabin (176). These are described as single face, flexible discs! Well, as we mentioned in the last column, we have "New Flexo" 301 and 303 both of which are double faced discs. 301 couples "Cheatin' On Me" (154) with "Jimtown Blues" and 303 couples "When I'm With You" (157) with "The Only, Only One." Perhaps the key lies in the "Flexo" versus "New Flexo"! Maybe the original "Flexo" issues were single faced and then later were reissued on "New Flexo" as double siders with additional titles. Can anyone confirm or deny? Has anyone seen a single faced "Flexo" or "New Flexo"?

Mr. Buck tells us that very few of the New Flexo sides other than those we've mentioned are jazz. Most are light classics or religious items, mainly choirs from white churches. He cites, as an example, an 8 inch transparent green New Flexo which has no catalog number. This one is a pair of piano solos by Jack L. Crouch: "Naiads At The Spring" (Juon) (780) and "Ballet Of The Happy Spirit" (Gluck) (781). He also mentions a ragtime piano solo by Jess Sutton on New Flexo 306: "Solid Ivory" (152). (Is this a one sieder? No reverse is mentioned.) Mr. Buck also states that the company credit on the Crouch item is Wabine, all others he's seen are Warner. Since the masters on the Crouch item are far higher than any of the others encountered it would appear Wabine was a successor to Warner. Anyone have anything on this?

Mr. Buck says that Mr. Campbell lives in Kansas City but he has never found him at home. We wonder if any collectors in that area would investigate this and see if any information on dates, personnel, etc. can be obtained! How about it readers?

Personal contact is always better than correspondence!

Mr. Thrune has a 5 inch double faced translucent blue disc made by Warner Record Co., K. C., Mo. (They seem to come in all sizes) with light tan printing. This would appear to be a promotional record. The name at the top of the label is Mussehl & Westphal Mfg., Fort Atkinson, Wis. and there is no catalog number. One side is identified only as "Saw Solo" which Herb says is "My Wild Irish Rose" accompanied by a good piano. Master is 239. The reverse is a Saw Duet, master 238-2. Herb says this is "Way Down Upon the Swanee River" with the saws accompanied by a hot piano playing sort of the way Bennie Moten's record of "Get Low Down Blues" starts out. Then Herb also has a 9 3/4 inch (another size!) blue plastic with tan print disc with the name Unity and credited to Unity School of Christianity, K. C., Mo. This is number 401: A. The Old Fountain/A Healing Song/Sung by Mrs. Floyd Robbins/Orchestra Accomp. Master is 224. The B side is The Lord's Prayer Sung by Male Quartette and has no master number.

Many thanks Messrs. Buck and Thrune! Let this inspire others to come forward with other issues, sizes, companies, etc.! This just whets the well known appetite. There are still a lot of missing master numbers in this K. C. recorded series! Let's go all..

We'd like to take time here to thank those who have sent in data on small labels of the twenties. We don't have all the letters at hand just now but included, among others, are: Paul Sheatsley, New York; Ralph Fairchild, Ontario, California; Wm. C. H. Frase, Minneapolis; Bob Graf; Seattle; William Dean-Myatt, England; Bert Whyatt, England; Art Badrock, England; Fred Cox, Indianapolis; R. M. Chicoine, Providence; J. Hegyi, Dayton; Charles R. Ewy, Baltimore; LeRoy E. Fay, Swampscott, Mass.; W. R. Shaw, Lebanon, Penna.; Roy Wanser, Dayton; Stan Blachman, Warrensville Hts., Ohio; John Baker, Columbus, Ohio and many others. Keep it up!

Label of The Month: Our entry this time is another of the Olympic group. Included in this group were Olympic, Melody, LaBelle, Majestic, Mac-Levin, Ross Stores,

one of the many varieties of Supertone, etc. They all used the same catalog numbers with dance items in a 1400 series and vocal items in a 1500 series. Our specimen for this time is Arthur Fields Melody Record with credit to Arthur Fields Record Co., New York, N. Y. Data for our illustrated item (B side shown) is: Arthur Fields Melody Record 1516. A. "Crying For You" (Cohen-Miller) (1516-A)/B. "Wanita (Wanna Eat? Wanna Eat?)" (Sherman-Coslow) (1516-B), both sides as by Arthur Fields, baritone with Orch. We have this same coupling on Melody 1516 with identical data except: As by Walter Hale, Tenor (sic), Orch. Acc. If released at the same time as the corresponding issue on the parent label, Olympic, this would date as April 1923. The label of the Arthur Fields record is Black with Gold design and lettering.

The unsolved problem with all these subsidiary labels which use the identical catalog numbers as the label from which they derive, is to determine how many different issues were released. In this case, for example, all catalog numbers known to exist on Olympic might also exist on Arthur Fields. But they may have only issued a handful of the couplings on this label and all other missing catalog numbers in the series may not exist on this particular label. So we can only list those actually seen on the specific label which leaves our Arthur Fields listing at the grand total of just one! Yes, this is the only one found to date. Any others readers?

The research goes on ... Perfect Numerical is being typed and when it is finished there will be a Perfect issue of this magazine with the complete catalog of the "Dance" series from Pe 14000 to 15279 and the "Race" series from 101 to 140. Also a discussion of the Pathe-Perfect Company and their recording series and practices. We still need data on those missing Perfects listed in earlier columns and, of course, data on all the small labels of the twenties. Keep the data coming!!! Next specific label group to be cataloged will be the Cameo-Romeo-Lincoln-Variety-Muse-Tremont one. This is the Cameo company and its subsidiaries. So keep that in mind. Until next time then, keep that data coming in. Contact us at Salem Road, RFD 2, Pound Ridge, New York or c/o Record Research.



BLUES IN REVIEW

* * * * *

by Barry Hansen

LIGHTNIN' SLIM - Excello 2173

2173-A TOM CAT BLUES (J. West)

2173-B BED BUG BLUES (Hicks-West)

Vocals with harmonica, electric guitar & drums

One of the most unspoiled "primitive" blues singers active today gives out with a couple of beautiful lowdown slow blue sides. TOM CAT BLUES is a first-class example of folk Negro allegory, while its plattermate is very directly concerned with a very tangible problem of Southern life. Lightnin' Slim's last outing (GI SLIM/ROOSTER BLUES) had a trace of artificiality, but this is all real, and one of the top blues discs of the year. The instrumental work is magnificently idiomatic, especially the harmonica. On top of that, a marvellous high-fidelity recording.

LONESOME SUNDOWN - Excello 2174

2174-A LEARN TO TREAT ME BETTER (West-Green)

2174-B LOVE ME NOW (Green-West)

Vocals with electric guitar, piano & drums

This singer has been erratic; he has made some very good records and some very bad ones. This is one of his better items. The lyrics on both sides are quite interesting, and the singer, whose voice has a mean streak, puts them over well. The style of singing and playing is largely city-bred, the pianist favoring triplets and trills rather tiresomely. The record avoids most of the pitfalls of the city style, however, and is lowdown and sincere enough to be interesting.

JIMMY REED - Vee-Jay 347

59-1248 WHERE CAN YOU BE (Reed)

59-1319 FOUND LOVE (Reed)

Both vocals with harmonica, el. guitars, drums.

Many blues singers are forever changing their approach these days, but not Jimmy Reed. Certainly, his style has changed since he made Vee-Jay 100, but the change has been very gradual, and no break can be found between any one record and the next. He just keeps singing the blues in his inimitably natural way; every Reed record is a work of art, and every so often he comes out with a real classic. The current disc is not one of those, but it presents Reed in good form indeed. His bright harmonica, sincere singing, interesting material, infectious beat and fascinating diction are all here. Reed's last record, BABY WHAT YOU WANT ME TO DO (VJ 333) was a national hit, and this disc, a completely unspoiled Reed blues, is being played on Top 40 shows all over the nation. Long live Jimmy Reed.

JUNIOR WELLS - Profile

4005 - 25-113 I COULD CRY (Wells)

25-114 CHA CHA CHA IN BLUE (Dixon-Wells) (No vocal)

4011- 25-119 LITTLE BY LITTLE (Mel London)

25-120 COME ON IN THIS HOUSE (Wells)

Vocals with el. guitar, bass & drums; add harmonica 114, 120; add piano 119, 113.

Wells, a first-rate Chicago blues man of the Little Walter school, has four interesting sides on a new Chicago label. Sometimes the playing (as on recent Muddy Waters discs) is over-ornate, but the blues remains on the whole simple and direct. I COULD

(continued on page 20)

RHYTHM & BLUES

By
ANTHONY
ROTANTE

THE RECORDS OF MERCY DEE WALTON

Little is known about this recorded blues singer. Any data about him would certainly be welcome. In BILLBOARD 6/25/49, a reviewer had the following comments about Mercy Dee's recording, Spire 11-001 "Relaxed Blues - Warbler does a nicely understated blues in the old manner for 'Lonesome Cabin'".

Perhaps, the most interesting sidelight about this review is that it appeared under a heading, RHYTHM AND BLUES, used for the first time by Billboard. Previously Billboard had employed the heading, RACE RECORDS.

MERCY DEE

1949

Vocal & piano

11-001A-A860 SPIRE 101 Lonesome Cabin Blues

(Log Cabin Blues)

11-001B SPIRE 101 Baba-Du-Lay Fever

(G.I. fever)

SPIRE 102 Evil and Hanky

SPIRE 102 Travelin' Alone Blues

MERCY DEE

w. rhythm acc. Mercy Dee (vo & p); unk. gu. & b.

Im 225 IMPERIAL 5104 Homely Baby

" 226 IMPERIAL 5104 Empty Life

" 227 Please Understand BAYOU 003

" 228 IMPERIAL 5110 Bird Brain Baby (MDW)

MERCY DEE

w. rhythm acc. (same as above)

Im 249 IMPERIAL 5110 Big Foot Country (MDW)

Im 250 IMPERIAL 5127 Danger Zone (MDW)

FK 19 Crepe On Your Door BAYOU 013

Im 251 IMPERIAL 5118 Roamin' Blues (MD)

" 252 Straight and Narrow (MD) Colony C102

" 253 IMPERIAL 5118 Bought Love (MD)

" 254 Old Fashioned Ways (MD) Colony C107

" 255 Happy Bachelor Blues " " C102

FK 20 Happy Bachelor BAYOU 013

Im 256 IMPERIAL 5127 Pay Off (MDW) COLONY C107

Anything In This World BAYOU 003

No Details

SPECIALTY 458

One Room Country Shack

My Woman Knows The Score

MERCY DEE

w. Thelma†

SPECIALTY 466

† Rest Man Blues

SPECIALTY 466

Fall Guy

MERCY DEE

w. Lady Fox®

SPECIALTY 481

® Get to Gettin' (MDW)

SPECIALTY 481

Dark Muddy Bottom (MDW)

MERCY DEE

Mercy Dee, (vo & p); unk., gu., b., dms., possible tambourine, ten. sax on FL 244 only.

FL 244 FLAIR 1073

Romp and Stomp Blues (Dee-Josea)

FL 245 FLAIR 1073

Oh Oh Please (Dee-Josea)

FL 256 FLAIR 1077

Come Back Maybelline (Berry)

FL 257 FLAIR 1077

True Love (Walton-Josea)

(vo. ch. by ensemble)

no details

FLAIR 1078

Have You Ever

FLAIR 1078

Stubborn Woman

BEYOND THE IMPRESSION

REPORTED BY JOHN STEINER

HARRY BLUESTONE

Harry Bluestone reports that the guitarist accompanying him on his several Standard Transcriptions was George Smith whom Harry last saw in the Hollywood studios several years ago. Harry is currently connected with a concern which I remember as Musi-Cue, Inc. arranging, leading and playing in bands backing TV shows. His last solo assignments were non-jazz sentiments for the Shirley Temple series. Many collectors may know Harry for an outstanding Decca date in the mid-30's with Bobby Sherwood (perhaps his first recording) on guitar. During the War Bluestone was connected with the V-Disc program and appeared on several.

ELLINGTONIA

Comparison with Bruce Davis, the Ellington man, of Ellington's RENT PARTY masters 19321-1, -2, and -3 (Oriole, Romeo, etc.) satisfied us that there were distinct differences in the Hodges solos on all three and perceptible differences were noted in Sam's trombone passages, allowing us to identify these as three different masters. However, aural comparison of Ellington's MOOD INDIGO, HOT AND BOTHERED and CREOLE LOVE CALL on the early Victor LP's (A) L 16006 (3) and (D) L 16006 (2) yielded no differences to our ears. Visual examination of the tracks disclosed differences in the run-off grooves, but the width of the grooving was identical. From these facts we have concluded that these are simply remakes from the same master.

VARSITY EIGHT

Did I ever give you the identification of the VARSITY EIGHT in the photo of your July/August 1958 issue (Vol. 3 No. 6). They are: (left to right)

Adrian Rollini	bass sax, etc.
Stan King	drums
Lloyd Olson	trombone
Frank Cush	trumpet
Irving Brodsky	piano
Bill Moore	trumpet
Orville Gibbs	reeds
Jim Duff	reeds

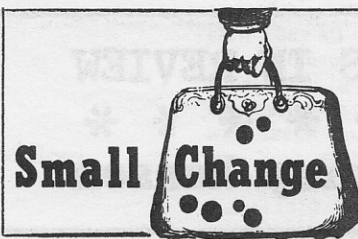
"SCHLAGZEUG" & "VAUDEVILLE"

In contrast to the several steps forward that jazz is being carried by Ralph Gleason's excellent syndicated column called The Rhythm Section, the new deutsche zeitschrift SCHLAGZEUG drops it backward with its confusions and dilutions. SCHLAGZEUG, meaning drum kit, is perhaps best in its departments of heavy-handed humor such as the cartoons interpreting live expressions and in their photos of Kaiser Wilhelm der Wild (Wild Bill Davison) in regal helmet and jacket and of his band of local recruits, carrying rifles with bayonets afixed, attacking a dixie tune in unison.

But when jazz gets out in left field as in Joe Laurie, Jr.'s book VAUDEVILLE (Henry Holt & Co. 1953), it really catches the rabbit punches. Joe's classification of Mildred Bailey as a negro vaude entertainer while omitting in the same category: Fess Williams, Johnny Dunn and Fats Waller, for example, are only in part offset by his acknowledgement that "the Negro contributed plenty of color to vaudeville--".

Laurie overlooked entirely the contribution of talented sidemen (not only jazzmen) and certainly they were prominent acts here in

(continued on page 12)



By
Woody
Backensto

Have you heard the fine OLE OLSEN Pathe-Perfect records? The spelling of OLSEN varies on the labels themselves -- in most cases it is misspelled OLSON or OLESON. Some of the back-to-back issues even spell the name differently on each side.

Many collectors believe these records feature Red Nichols and Miff Mole. Jimmy and Tommy Dorsey as well as Adrian Rollini have also been suggested in the personnel. However, the bossman turns out to be Lloyd H. "Ole" Olsen, the talented trombonist with the original CALIFORNIA RAMBLERS. His sidemen have remained obscure too long. So that discographies may recognize the fine musical talent, we list the details as given by the leader himself: Ole Olsen (tb); Charles Margulis, Henry Levine (tp); Alfie Evans, Arnold Brillhart, William McGill (saxes); Floyd Campbell (bjo); Irving Brodsky (p); David Dappeer (tuba); Stan King (dm).

- 106983 Sadie Green (The Vamp of New Orleans) - John Ryan (vo) - Pe 14669, Pat 36488
- 106984 Take Your Time - John Ryan (vo) - Pe 14691, Pat 36510
- 106985 Snag It - Pe 14669, Pat 36488

Another excellent record, OK 40896 by ARNOLD FRANK AND HIS ROGER'S CAFE ORCHESTRA, recorded September 8, 1927, is almost universally thought to feature Red Nichols. Jazz Directory so informs. Red Nichols has listened to this and is absolutely certain he is not on this record. While this coupling might appear to be another of the many Ed Kirkeby CALIFORNIA RAMBLERS sessions, we have found absolutely no evidence that such is the case. So here's another worthwhile record requiring research on the personnel. The following additional data can be supplied:

- 81324 Rain - Stan Thompson (vo)
- also PaE R3461 by TAMPA BLUE FIVE
- 81325 Black Maria - also PaE R3466 by TED WALLACE AND HIS ORCH.

A Nichols-sounding cornet, a Rollini-sounding bass sax, and a tenor sax in the Frankie Trumbauer vein have been reported on the following session recorded for RCA Victor in Camden, N. J., July 1, 1929:

- DOC DOUGHERTY AND HIS ORCHESTRA
- BVE-49442 Because You Love Me, Baby - Fred Erdman (vo) - Vi 40119B
- BVE-49443 Ninety in the Shade - Vi 40111A
- BVE-49444 Baby Girl - Carl Jeremias (vo) - Vi 40119A
- BVE-49445 Alcoholic Blues - Vi 40111B

The vocalists listed above are from Victor's files, although the record label credits Frank Luther. On listening to the first tune from this session Red Nichols said it was Sterling Bose (tp). Red suggested this session might have been organized by the Minneapolis pianist Doc Dougherty. Perhaps other researchers will take it from here.

ALL CORRESPONDENCE TO WOODY BACKENSTO
37 N. GIRARD ST., WOODBURY NEW JERSEY

ATTENTION! RECORD RESEARCH READERS,
COMING: A BIG DOUBLE ISSUE
WITH A SURPRISING HISTORY-MAKING
FEATURE.

THE AMERICAN MINSTREL THEATRE ON PHONOGRAPH RECORDS

1894-1929

A. R. Danberg

Part 6

(continued from Issue 30)

- MNA Victor 17293 (10", Take 3)
MOBILE MINSTRELS
"Down Where the Band is
Playing" "Honey You'se My &
Lady Love"
& "Pickin' Cotton", Collins &
Harlan.
- MNA Victor 35280 (12", Take 1)
NEW ORLEANS MINSTRELS
"At A Georgia Campmeeting"
"All I Want is my Black Baby
Back" - "On Emancipation Day"
& "Unlucky Mose" Darky Specialty
Golden and Hughes.
- MNA Victor 35264 (12")
TENNESSEE MINSTRELS
"Nigger Nigger Nigger Never
Die" - "Rufus Rastus" - "I'm
Going to Leave"
& "College Overture", Pryor's
Band.
- Additional minstrels in Victor catalogue for
1915:
- MNA Victor 35321 (12")
MISSOURI MINSTRELS
"Grand Old Flag" - "Darktown
is Out" - "Ta Ta"
& "Southern Wedding", Conway's
Band.
- Victor 35307 (12 Take 2)
NORTH CAROLINA MINSTRELS
"My Rainbow Coon" - "All
Coons Look Alike to Me" -
"Take Plenty of Shoes" -
& "Jimmy Trigger, or the Mili-
tary Hero" Golden & Hughes.
- Victor 35294 (12" Take 3)
RUBETOWN MINSTRELS
"All Hands Around" - "Old
Bill Jones" "Bingville Band"
& "Clamy Green - Darky
Specialty" Golden & Hughes.

Victor's advertised policy was to present
"lively and entertaining 'tabloids' of
minstrelsy, full of snappy repartee and
tuneful singing." Their 1916 catalogue
warned:

Don't get these minstrel records expect-
ing to hear sweet and soothing music --
it isn't that kind! But the records are
good entertainment for a jolly party
who likes vigorous singing and perfectly
obvious jokes, the point of which can
be grasped by the average person with-
out the aid of a map! Rousing bits of
comedy and melody by a talented
bunch of singers and comedians.

As stated previously, Victor was not
alone in their minstrel enterprises. As in
other years, many companies were producing
minstrel records; the same "talented bunch
of singers and comedians" performed for
Columbia too, under the name of the
RAMBLER MINSTREL COMPANY. Under
MINSTRELS, the Columbia Double Disc
Records Catalogue for 1911 includes:

- MNA Columbia A 5251 (12")
"Carrie from Caroline", "Happy
& Days in Dixie", "Darkies' School-
days" - Golden and Hughes.
- MNA Columbia A 479 (10")
RAMBLER MINSTRELS - "B"
& "I Don't Like your Family"
Billy Murray
- MNA Columbia A 469 (10")
RAMBLER MINSTRELS - "C"
& "Dearie", G. Alexander, Bt.
- MNA Columbia A 466 (10")
RAMBLER MINSTRELS - "D"
"Waltz Me Around Again Willie"
& "Oh Promise Me" Baritone Solo.
- MNA Columbia A 465 (10")
RAMBLER MINSTRELS - "E"
& "Whip-poor-will Sings",
Al Campbell, tenor.
- MNA Columbia A 462 (10")
RAMBLER MINSTRELS - "F"
"Moses Andrew Jackson, Goodbye"
& "In Good Old Summer Time"
John Myers, baritone.
- MNA Columbia A 459 (10")
RAMBLER MINSTRELS - "H"
"San Antonio"
& "Where Morning Glories Twine
Around the Door".
Byron G. Harlan, tenor.
- MNA Columbia A 464 (10")
RAMBLER MINSTRELS - "A"
"Kind of Like You Fussing 'Round"
& "Where the Sweet Magnolias Bloom"
Baritone solo.
- MNA Columbia A 461 (10")
"Laughing Song" MINSTRELS
& "In Golden Autumn Time"
Frank Stanley, baritone.
- MNA Columbia A 480 (10")
"Old Log Cabin"
& "He Goes to Church on Sunday"
B. Murray, tenor.
- MNA Columbia A 658 (10")
"Smiling Star" MINSTRELS
& "Hot Tamale Man"
Arthur Collins, bt.
- MNA Columbia A 667 (10")
"L-O-V-E Spells Trouble" Minstrels
& "That was Me" Bob Roberts, bt.

- 30385 Columbia A 5173 (12")
"Linder Green" - "Fly Fly Fly" "My
Rosy Rambler"
- 30405 "My Uncle's Farm" Vaudeville
Golden and Hughes.
- 30303 Columbia A 5138 (12")
"Virginia" - "Humming Coon"
"Climb Up Children"
- 30302 "Down Where Big Bananas Grow"
Collins and Harlan.
- 30174 Columbia A 5072 (12")
"Won't Go Home 'Till Morning,
Bill" - "Down in Jungle Town"
- 30173 "Down in Ga. on Camp Meeting
Day" - Collins and Harlan.
- 30277 Columbia A 5123 (12")
"Kiss Minstrel Boy Goodbye" -
"When Pal of Mine Steals Gal of
Mine"
- 30278 "Wild Deer" - "I Wish I Was in
Heaven Sittin' Down" RAMBLER
MIN.

This last record is typical of the kind of
entertainment the Rambler Minstrels offered,
and musically it is better than most.

Interlocutor: "Arthur, I heard you swear
outrageously the other day."

Arthur: "Why Mr. Stanley, I did the best
I can."

Playing with the meaning of the word
"outrageously," Arthur Collins and Frank
Stanley begin the show on Columbia A5123
(side B). A quick chorus of the opening
overture, "Wild Deer", has been sung by
the Quartet with a rousing orchestral back-
ground, the bones rattled, and the Inter-
locutor has requested "Gentlemen, be
seated." Collins and Stanley continue ex-
changing jokes, the Interlocutor always
addressing the end man by his first name.
Harry Macdonough, the other end man, tells
Mr. Stanley a story about an old maid at a
party he once attended; then it's Arthur's
turn again to exchange puns with Mr. Stan-
ley about his fiancée's father. After a
minute of this, the Interlocutor abruptly
announces, "Mr. Collins will sing, "I Wish
I was in Heaven Sittin' Down." With the
restricted cast on the minstrel records, the
end men double as vocal soloists; this par-
ticipation as both chief comics and singers
is very similar to the earliest minstrel per-
formances.

"I wish I was in Heaven Sittin' Down" is
very jolly, entertaining music. The
orchestra's introduction features the tuba
playing a rumba beat which continues
during the verse. Collins sings the lilting
melody and carefree words:

(continued on page 20)

There are many other fascinating Carmichael compositions -- How Little We Know, I Get Along Without You Very Well, The Nearness of You, Heart and Soul ... but those I have enumerated seem more the heart of Carmichael than most of his others, and to me they are more deserving of being singled out for loving care, such as the priceless trio sides of Stanley Wrightsman, Eddie Miller and George Van Eps issued by Jump in the late forties and which glowed like exquisite lanterns in a scented summer dusk, and just about as briefly, too. This perfectly meshed group would do for One Morning in May and I Should Have Known You Years Ago what they did for Stars Fell on Alabama and It's Easy to Remember. Rosy McHargue's Ragtimers could do as much for Judy and Baltimore Oriole, and LaVere's Chicago Loopers for New Orleans. For that matter, Benny Goodman still could do it as his small combos did for so many exciting standards up to the mid-forties. And Louis would bestow the taste and treatment they deserve - minus the appalling Mantovani-type backing he has succumbed to in far too many latter-day releases. Doc Evans and his Band would be just right, as would the chamber-music jazz of Harry Blons that made such distinctive music on Audiophile; and by themselves Mundell Lowe, Barney Kessel or Chet Atkins have what it takes; so has Red Dougherty, Charlie Parker and Willie Smith; and of the singers, Claire Austin, Lee Wiley and sometimes Ella Fitzgerald, and even Sarah Vaughan in her less note-stretching moods. Teagarden and McKenzie once would have been just right, but for the words they might no longer do.

Beyond The Impression (continued)

the Midwest where I observed vaudeville from the mid-teens onward. For example, Red Norvo was a familiar feature with Paul Ash at the Oriental Theater, Bill Davison with Benny Meroff at the Granada, Louis Panico and Al Turk with various bands, Vic Berton with Art Kahn at the Sennett, etc. all in Chicago, Bunny Berigan in a stage band at the Parkway in Madison, and, more to the point, Waller, Muggsy and Brunies with Ted Lewis travelling troupe. Although Vaudeville mentions in brief passing Calloway and Ellington on the vaude stage, it is not noted that swing bands transfused the last pints of new blood into vaude during the depression years. Forerunners of the swing bands in the Midwest were the reviews of the Sunset, Grand Terrace and Cabin Club which took to the vaude stage during their slim seasons in the clubs. This practice may not have been as common in the East where Laurie headquartered, yet the Apollo has been eminently active for several decades.

There is no mention of the jazz-type shows on the TOBA circuit, nor of the TOBA circuit, nor of a TOBA theater. Yet acts were commonly exchanged between the TOBA circuit and white circuits, at least in Chicago. Laurie recalled Butterbeans (whom he calls Butterbean) and Susie, Ma Rainey, the Mills sisters, the Mills Brothers, Bessie and Mamie Smith, also several composers, arrangers and producers often associated with the jazz picture such as Shelton Brooks, Will Marion Cook, Handy, J. Rosamond Johnson and James Bland, and also some ragtime pianists including Myrick, the "ragtime kid" and Mike Bernard, and also musico-comedy acts such as Buck & Bubbles, but he omitted Tom Brown's Rubes, the Banjo Ragtimers, the Six Brown Brothers, The California Ramblers (who played vaude houses in the N. Y. area for almost a year in the early 20's), the Original Creole Jazz Band, the Original New Orleans Jazz Band and the various Clarence Williams and Jelly Roll Morton groups. He further puts jazz in its place by reporting that Lombardo received \$10,000 per week from vaude, and the bands of Ben Bernie, Rudy Vallee and Fred Waring were also in big money, while only the hokum variety of jazz offered by Ted Lewis ever reached this level. Ethel Waters sobbed her way into \$4,500 weekly and the names of Lena Horne and Josephine Baker are also mentioned. But Louis Armstrong and Duke Ellington are named only in a miscellaneous listing elsewhere.

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| | The Old Bush | |
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| CH 15 | Brigid Thomas Murphy Throw Away the Brush (Reels) | Seán 'Ac Dhonncha Vincent Broderick (Concert Flute) |
| CH 16 | A Thousand Good-Byes Poor Ireland Battoring Ram (Jig) | Seósamh Ó hEanaí Vincent Broderick (Concert Flute) |

45's 12/6

- | | |
|---------|---|
| CEF 002 | Music of film "Mise Éire" Radio Éireann Symphony Orchestra under the Direction of Seán Ó Riada. |
| CEF 005 | Songs with Harp Cártaín Watkins |
| CEF 006 | Songs with Harp Déirdre Ní Fhlóinn |

33's 27/6

- | | |
|---------|---|
| CEF 001 | Tomás Ó Súilleabháin Songs with Piano Accompaniment by Seán Ó Riada |
| | Radio Éireann Light Orchestra Irish Music |
| CEF 003 | Songs with Piano Accordion Accompaniment by Albert Healy Sung by Seán Ó Siocháin and Máirtín Ó Díomasaigh |
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- | | |
|---------|--|
| EEF 003 | Intermediate Poetry (Set for Examination 1960) |
| EEF 004 | Leaving Certificate Examination Poetry. |

For further information on "Gael-Linn" releases their offices are 54 Grafton Street, Dublin. A special thanks is due to the office staff who translated their catalog listing from Irish into English for the benefit of RR readers.

California Ramblers (continued)

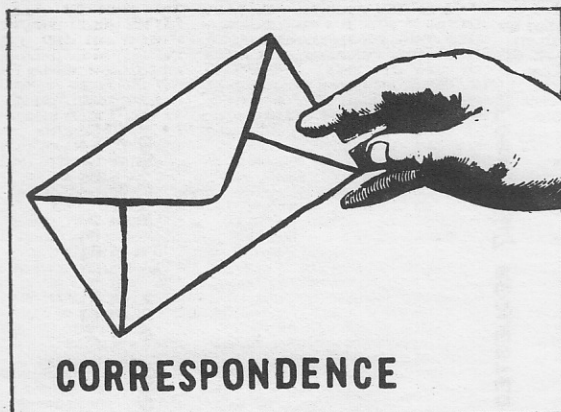
SAM RUBY (reeds) - an unemployed musician "laying off successfully" at Veterans Hospital in the Bronx. After the RAMBLERS he played with Bert Lown, Meyer Davis, Mike Markel, Andy Sanella, Phil Napoleon, and others. In 1940 he enlisted in the Royal Canadian Navy and played solo clarinet with their band. Was also in the U.S. Marine Corps, with Quantico Marine Band where he was in charge of the Post Orchestra. As a Purser-Pharmacist Mate he went to sea and saw quite a bit of the world. Always played music and still does.

JACK RUSSIN (p) - still active professionally, freelancing in the Los Angeles, California area.

HERBERT S. "HERB" WEIL (dm) - drumming professionally, doing single engagements around New York City, also associated with Local 802's steady engagement welfare fund as administrative assistant.

HERB H. WINFIELD, SR. (tb) - reports he left the music business in 1948 "after 30 consecutive Paul Whiteman one-nighters - that did it!" He is semi-retired in Miami, Florida, a parttime chauffeur, and a "good listener to good music". Reports Herb, Jr. does pretty good all on his own and is with Henry Levine at the Deauville Hotel in Florida.

13



November 28, 1960

Gentlemen,

I have just read a copy of the article on John Lee Hooker in the Nov. RR and would like to volunteer some background that may be useful to further discography, biographical research, etc. I was a disc jockey in Detroit from 1942 - 1950 and was closely associated with the jazz scene in that area from 1940 - 1951. The first time I ever heard John Lee Hooker was when Bernard Besman, a record distributor (Pan-Am) on Woodward Avenue (near the Paradise Theatre) asked me to listen to some audition dubs he had made with J.L.H. a short time before. I distinctly remember the reaction to Hooker's performance on records and subsequent in-person auditions of his work. He was playing an improvised home-made instrument the first time I heard him at Besman's. He later told me that Hooker had literally camped on his doorstep and had heckled and pestered him into making the audition dubs. So I would assume that Besman was the first person to record John Lee Hooker at all, unless the dubs were made at a downtown studio which would account for the Barbee mentioned in the article. At any rate Besman, now a manufacturers rep in California will have the information and I am writing to him asking for the details. His partner John Kaplan, was also involved in the early recordings. He is still a record distrib in Detroit operating as J-K Distributors there.

Besman made numerous records with jazz artists (Milt Jackson "Bobbin' with Robbin'", Sonny Stitt "Relaxin' with Randle" and pop and rhythm and blues records as well, "Bell Boy Boogie" by Tedd Rhodes, etc. Most of these records were later sold in a batch to KING in Cincinnati and were issued on various labels under numerous original and pseudonyms. For example, I have the Stitt records under the pseudonym LORD NELSON, "Stardust" and "Relaxin'" (shortened title) among them. The John Lee Hooker records might have been included in this batch, hence the pseudonyms in some cases. The Tedd Rhodes records are still in King Current catalogues. The Stitt records also came out under Russell Jacquet's name for King.

After I first heard Hooker his record of Boogie Chillen became a big pop hit as well as a rhythm and blues success and he played numerous spots in Detroit. Until that he was a factory worker (I think in the foundry at Ford's, although I am not sure). I used him twice on jazz concerts, the last time in September, 1949 at the Broadway Capitol Theatre in Detroit. I just checked the old programs and he was featured as the blues performer on a concert that featured, among others, unknowns like Kenny Burrell on guitar (he was still in high school), Tate Houston on baritone sax, Alvin Jackson (Milt's brother), and Bill deArango, guitar (he won an Esquire Award many years ago, is now a teacher in Cleveland). Hooker played a half hour blues program that included Boogie Chillen, Key to the Highway, and a Train Blues. Hooker also played two sessions at clubs that were recorded off the air. One with Maceo Merriweather playing piano (not with John Lee, of course, but with drums, recorded 1944). Sonny Solomon has this.

There are many recorded sessions from these early days in Detroit still around. I have sessions with Joe Turner and Milt Jackson (1944), Dizzy Gillespie with Milt Jackson (1944), Illinois Jacquet with Joe Jones, Milt Jackson, Al McKibben, Harry Edison (1946), Dizzy Gillespie with Stitt and Charlie Parker; Stitt at the El Sino with Charlie Parker and Miles

Davis, Sonny Berman with Shelly Manne, Sarah Vaughn with Dizzy, Wardell Gray, Billy Mitchell, Milt Jackson, and Tommy Flanagan, and many others. Dave Usher did many sessions that were recorded and I'm sure there are others as well. These were really Golden Days in Detroit, 1943 - 1951 and, of course, later.

Incidentally, the great gospel performer J. Earl Hines died in Cleveland a number of weeks ago, Mahalia Jackson was at the funeral. Hines' choir, the Temple Baptist Church, is doing a memorial album Dec. 1 and they are far greater than Bradford's Abyssinians group. Hines did all the arrangements and they are mighty performances.

A final note to this lengthy epistle. I ran across some letters, etc. in finishing the notes for the Big Bill Broenzy documentary that prove conclusively that Big Bill was really Sammy Sampson (questionable in all the discographies I have seen). If you would like an illustrated note on the details, just let me know.

BILL RANDLE

W E R E

Cleveland Broadcasting Inc.
Cleveland Ohio

Editors' notes: Thank you, Mr. Randle, for a fascinating letter. We certainly would be interested in receiving further data from you regarding the subject matter in your letter.

TONY PARENTI: DISCOGRAPHICAL RESEARCH PROGRAM

Continuing with our Parenti research, we herewith include a letter from the well-known discographer - researcher, Ken Crawford of Pittsburgh Penna.

9/13/60

Gentlemen,

Glad to hear that you are going to revise the Tony Parenti discography that appeared in a past issue of RR. There were quite a number of errors in it, no doubt about that! I received copies of letters sent to you by Howard Waters and Bozy White on the same subject, and agree entirely with them both, on all of their points, and corrections (re Berigan, etc.), so I won't go over all of that again.

Going over the TP discography in issue #28, I can add the following corrections:

11/15/29 Rudy Marlow (Fred Rich) date - solos are by Jimmy Dorsey NOT Tony.

12/8/30 Lloyd Keating (Ben Selvin) date - again el solos are Dorsey, not Tony.

3/18/31 Chester Leighton (Fred Rich) date - ditto, Jimmy el not Tony.

On the 6/15/31 date by Fred Rich, and the 9/15/31 date by Kate Smith, I can't figure how you can be sure it's Tony Parenti, as it is virtually impossible to tell WHO the el/sax work is by, as there just isn't enough to go on. Don Conner lists the Kate Smith Vc 2448, etc., as including Benny Goodman on el, but then again, who can be sure, as there is no hot work to go by.

Now, as to the additions to the discography by Parenti, I can offer the following as definitely including Tony on el (solos) and sax section work.

11/21/36 ARC 70201 Mx20308 Where the Lazy River Goes By

Chick Bullock Levee Loungers

" ARC 70201 Mx20309 With Plenty of Money and You

Chick Bullock Levee Loungers

" ARC 70211 Mx20306 There's a Silver Moon On the

Golden Gate - Jack Shilkret Orch.

" ARC 70211 Mx20307 Twinkle Twinkle Little Star

-Jack Shilkret Orch.

This date also includes Artie Shaw who takes at least one of the solos on Clarinet.

5/26/41 Decca 3846 Mx DLA 2407A Just Around The Corner

" Decca 3846 Mx DLA 2408A Down the old Church Aisle

" Decca 4272 Mx DLA 2409A Tiger Rag

" Decca 4272 Mx DLA 2410A Jazz Me Blues

This date also included Ted Lewis on some of the el solos, of course, and this date is DEFINITELY the only Ted Lewis date with Parenti.... These are the only 2 dates I can say positively, that Tony made in NYC, up thru 1941, that were not listed in the discography.

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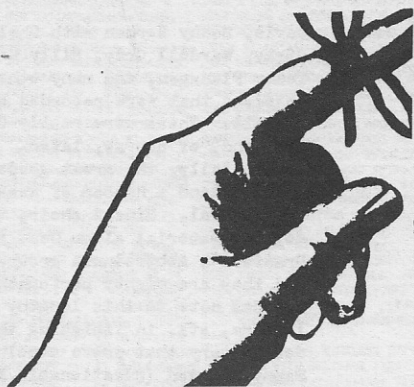
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Victoria Spivey has been appearing at Gerdes FOLK CITY here in N. Y. C. singing some real great old time blues. Watch for a pictorial section on Miss Spivey in a forthcoming issue of Record Research.

Coming: A revision of Tony Parenti's
discography which appeared in issue 28.

Minstrel Theatre (continued)

You can talk about your fairy lands,
Be contented with your big brass bands,
But there's a place above the clouds,
That the preachers talk about ...

I wish I was in heaven sittin' down,
With old Saint Peter handin' me a crown;
I'd just do nothin' to eternity,
'Cause that's the place that's lookin'
good to me,
I wish I was in heaven sittin' down.

The orchestra drops out during the chorus and in both chorus and verse Macdonough's high tenor harmonizes above Collins' baritone and Stanley's bass. After a repeat of the chorus, the orchestra plays a tag ending and the record concludes with applause and whistles.

The "show" offered on this 1911 record represents the characteristic format of the recorded minstrel performance. The combination of sentimental songs, applause, laughter and foolery was to interest the big record companies - Columbia, Victor, and Edison - for only a few more year, however. After 1915, a definite decline in the production of minstrel records would take place.

(To be Continued)

Blues In Review (Continued)

CRY and COME ON IN THIS HOUSE are slow blues, passionately sung. Wells, whose style was once identical to Little Walter's, has picked up a tremolo in his voice a bit like Little Junior Parker's. Both sides are well sung. LITTLE BY LITTLE is a vocal group side, but the singing (unlike that of most Negro vocal groups) is lusty and lowdown, with plenty of strong blues feeling. The combo holds solidly to the beat. Then there is CHA CHA CHA IN BLUE, a rather perplexing instrumental in which some good harmonica work is joined to a trite rhythm figure with a cowbell which is miserably mistuned. Together, these sides are not Wells' best, but they are worth a listen.